



## **Texas Department of Insurance**

### **Division of Workers' Compensation**

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution, MS-48

7551 Metro Center Drive, Suite 100 • Austin, Texas 78744-1645

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## **MEDICAL FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FINDINGS AND DECISION**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Requestor Name and Address**

VISTA MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL  
4301 VISTA ROAD  
PASADENA TX 77504-2117

#### **Respondent Name**

ACE AMERICAN INSURANCE CO

#### **Carrier's Austin Representative Box**

Box Number 15

#### **MFDR Tracking Number**

M4-06-0920-01 (previously M4-06-0675-01 and  
M4-06-0868-01)

### **REQUESTOR'S POSITION SUMMARY**

**Requestor's Position Summary:** Position summary not submitted.

**Amount in Dispute:** \$14,990.60

### **RESPONDENT'S POSITION SUMMARY**

**Respondent's Position Summary:** Although the Respondent submitted a response to the request for medical fee dispute resolution a position summary was not included.

**Response Submitted by:** Gallagher Bassett, 6504 International Pkwy #2100, Plano, TX 75093

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Dates of Service	Disputed Services	Amount In Dispute	Amount Due
November 19, 2004	Outpatient Surgery	\$14,990.60	\$0.00

### **FINDINGS AND DECISION**

This medical fee dispute is decided pursuant to Texas Labor Code §413.031 and all applicable, adopted rules of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation.

#### **Background**

1. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307 sets out the procedures for resolving medical fee disputes.
2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.1, effective May 16, 2002, 27 *Texas Register* 4047, requires that "Reimbursement for services not identified in an established fee guideline shall be reimbursed at fair and reasonable rates as described in the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, §413.011 until such period that specific fee guidelines are established by the commission."
3. Texas Labor Code §413.011(d) requires that fee guidelines must be fair and reasonable and designed to ensure the quality of medical care and to achieve effective medical cost control. The guidelines may not

provide for payment of a fee in excess of the fee charged for similar treatment of an injured individual of an equivalent standard of living and paid by that individual or by someone acting on that individual's behalf. It further requires that the Division consider the increased security of payment afforded by the Act in establishing the fee guidelines.

4. This request for medical fee dispute resolution was received by the Division on September 16, 2005. Pursuant to 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(g)(3), effective January 1, 2003, 27 *Texas Register* 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, the Division notified the requestor on September 27, 2005 to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute as set forth in the rule.
5. The services in dispute were reduced/denied by the respondent with the following reason codes:
  - \*04815, \*04814 - Unbundling
  - \*04816 – No MAR
  - \*04835 – Denial after reconsideration

## **Findings**

1. The Division requested additional information on September 17, 2005; however, the Requestor did not respond to the request the additional information.
2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(g)(3)(B), effective January 1, 2003, 27 *Texas Register* 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including “a copy of any pertinent medical records.” Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor has not provided copies of all medical records pertinent to the services in dispute. Although the requestor did submit a copy of the operative report and discharge summary, the requestor did not submit a copy of the anesthesia record, post-operative care record, or other pertinent medical records sufficient to support the services in dispute. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of §133.307(g)(3)(B).
3. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(g)(3)(D), effective January 1, 2003, 27 *Texas Register* 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to provide “documentation that discusses, demonstrates, and justifies that the payment amount being sought is a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement.” Review of the submitted documentation finds that:
  - The requestor did not provide documentation to demonstrate how it determined its usual and customary charges for the disputed services.
  - Documentation of the comparison of charges to other carriers was not presented for review.
  - Documentation of the amount of reimbursement received for these same or similar services was not presented for review.
  - The Division has previously found that “hospital charges are not a valid indicator of a hospital's costs of providing services nor of what is being paid by other payors,” as stated in the adoption preamble to the Division's former *Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline*, 22 *Texas Register* 6276. It further states that “Alternative methods of reimbursement were considered... and rejected because they use hospital charges as their basis and allow the hospitals to affect their reimbursement by inflating their charges...” 22 *Texas Register* 6268-6269. Therefore, the use of a hospital's “usual and customary” charges cannot be favorably considered when no other data or documentation was submitted to support that the payment amount being sought is a fair and reasonable reimbursement for the services in dispute.
  - The requestor did not submit a copy of the alleged contract for review.
  - No data or information was submitted from the Medical Data Research database to support the requested reimbursement.
  - No documentation was presented by the requestor to support that the referenced contract was in effect at the time of the disputed services.
  - While managed care contracts are relevant to determining a fair and reasonable reimbursement, the Division has previously found that a reimbursement methodology based upon payment of a percentage of a hospital's billed charges does not produce an acceptable payment amount. This methodology was considered and rejected by the Division in the adoption preamble to the Division's former *Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline*, which states at 22 *Texas Register* 6276 that:

“A discount from billed charges was another method of reimbursement which was considered. Again, this method was found unacceptable because it leaves the ultimate reimbursement in the control of the hospital, thus defeating the statutory objective of effective cost control and the statutory standard not to pay more than for similar treatment of an injured individual of an equivalent standard of living. It also provides no incentive to contain medical costs, would be administratively burdensome for the Commission and system participants, and would require additional Commission resources.”

Therefore, a reimbursement amount that is calculated based upon a percentage of a hospital's billed charges cannot be favorably considered when no other data or documentation was submitted to support that the payment amount being sought is a fair and reasonable reimbursement for the services in dispute.

- In support of the requested reimbursement, the requestor submitted redacted explanations of benefits, and selected portions of EOBs, from various sample insurance carriers. However, the requestor did not discuss or explain how the sample EOBs support the requestor's position that additional payment is due. Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor did not establish that the sample EOBs are for services that are substantially similar to the services in dispute. The carriers' reimbursement methodologies are not described on the EOBs. Nor did the requestor explain or discuss the sample carriers' methodologies or how the payment amount was determined for each sample EOB. The requestor did not discuss whether such payment was typical for such services or for the services in dispute.
- The requestor did not submit documentation to support that payment of the amount sought is a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement for the services in this dispute.
- The requestor did not support that the requested alternative reimbursement methodology would satisfy the requirements of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.1.

The request for additional reimbursement is not supported. Thorough review of the documentation submitted by the requestor finds that the requestor has not demonstrated or justified that payment of the amount sought would be a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement for the services in dispute. Additional payment cannot be recommended.

### **Conclusion**

The Division would like to emphasize that individual medical fee dispute outcomes rely upon the evidence presented by the requestor and respondent during dispute resolution, and the thorough review and consideration of that evidence. After thorough review and consideration of all the evidence presented by the parties to this dispute, it is determined that the submitted documentation does not support the reimbursement amount sought by the requestor. The Division concludes that this dispute was not filed in the form and manner prescribed under Division rules at 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307. The Division further concludes that the requestor failed to support its position that additional reimbursement is due. As a result, the amount ordered is \$0.00.

### ***ORDER***

Based upon the documentation submitted by the parties and in accordance with the provisions of Texas Labor Code §413.031, the Division has determined that the requestor is entitled to \$0.00 reimbursement for the services in dispute.

### **Authorized Signature**

_____	_____	October 20, 2011
Signature	Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer	Date

### ***YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST AN APPEAL***

Either party to this medical fee dispute has a right to request an appeal. A request for hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the DWC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **twenty** days of your receipt of this decision. A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers Compensation, P.O. Box 17787, Austin, Texas, 78744. The party seeking review of the MDR decision shall deliver a copy of the request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute at the same time the request is filed with the Division. **Please include a copy of the *Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision*** together with any other required information specified in 28 Texas Administrative Code §148.3(c), including a **certificate of service demonstrating that the request has been sent to the other party**.

**Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 512-804-4812.**